

501 - 503 ELEVENTH STREET, NW (COMMERICAL)  
(Whitlow's)  
Square 347  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-794

HABS  
DC  
WASH,  
651-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

# HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

501-503 ELEVENTH STREET, N.W. (COMMERCIAL)  
(Whitlow's)

HABS No. DC-794

HABS  
DC  
WASH  
651-

**LOCATION:** Square 347, Lot 806  
(1021 E Street, N.W., Lot 806)  
Washington, District of Columbia

**SIGNIFICANCE:** Designed by C.A. Didden for Albert Carry in 1907, Whitlow's is typical of many of the small-scale buildings that once graced Washington's downtown. One of the building's most distinctive features is its structural glass storefront added in 1940. Whitlow's contributes to the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site.

**DESCRIPTION:** Whitlow's is a three-story Renaissance revival style rectangular brick building that occupies the northeast corner of the intersection of 11th (nine bays) and E Streets (three bays), N.W. The 32 ft. x 70 ft. 6 in. structure is brick and steel above a concrete foundation. The upper two floors are detailed with brick quoins, flat arches with keystones above one-over-one sash windows, and a full cornice. A brick parapet with panels rises above the cornice. There are three storefronts on the ground floor. Whitlow's Restaurant occupies the corner, utilizing the E Street (south) facade and four bays of the 11th Street (west) facade. A barber shop occupies the two center bays on 11th Street north of Whitlow's. 501 11th Street, the northern three bays of the 11th Street facade, constitutes the third storefront. City directories suggest that the original entrance to the restaurant was located in the south facade; the entrance to the apartments was located within the west facade.

Finishes within the interior of the building, which was designed to have four flats (D.C. Building Permit No. 2516, February 18, 1907), appear to be little changed on the upper floors. The original tile floor with Greek key border, panelled stair with turned balusters, and simple architrave molding around windows and doors still remains. The interior of the restaurant is depicted in field photographs appended to this documentation.

The exterior of Whitlow's retains its original appearance on the upper two floors. In 1908 Albert Carry applied for a permit to "put flat floor on roof of rear building, second floor, 3'-6" wide, 21'-0" long" (D.C. Building Permit No. 413, August 4, 1908). In 1924 Mrs. M.H. Lohse applied to build,

two platforms; One 6'-0" x 4'-11" and one 22'-0" x 4'-11" both to be supported by heavy angle and channel columns, flooring to be of Diamond Checkered Plate 3/16" thick. To have necessary pipe railing. The latter platform which is to be erected at 2nd floor level is to have a counter-balanced ladder to grade. These platforms are to be erected on the rear in areaway of the above premises.

Bruno Brothers did the work at a cost of \$300 (D.C. Building Permit 4044, October 22, 1924). In 1936 Mrs. Martha Lohse applied for a permit to remove partitions, install skylights and two toilets and to change the location of one toilet at a cost of \$2000. Porter & Lockie were the architects for the work; Skinker & Garrett, the contractor (D.C. Building Permit 188042).

The present restaurant storefront, which was designed by architect Bernard Lyon Frishman in 1940 (D.C. Building Permit 235194, August 5, 1940), cost \$5000. Whitlow's features an elaborate pale green structural glass storefront. Dark green glass forms a border. A streamlined chrome cornice extends above the storefront. The E Street facade of the storefront houses an oversized lozenge-shaped window with alternating panels of clear and mirrored glass. (The mirrored glass corresponds with the walls of the original facade.) "WHITLOW'S RESTAURANT" is painted in orange letters between the window and the dark green border. Entrances to the restaurant and the apartment building are located within the west facade of the storefront. The sides of the double-door entrance to the restaurant are framed in glass block lit with white neon. A suspended metal canopy projects above the door. A similar entrance at the north end of the restaurant storefront provides access to the apartments above. The residential entrance is smaller and lacks the projecting canopy. Two small square windows as well as a carryout window and menu frame are located on the west facade. "WHITLOW'S RESTAURANT" also appears in orange letters below the cornice of the 11th Street storefront. A vertical neon sign proclaiming "GRILL/BEER" is attached to the southwest corner of the building at the second floor level. The building is presently in good condition.

#### HISTORY:

C.A. Didden & Son designed 501-03 E Street, N.W. for Albert Carry in 1907. August Getz & Son constructed the building, which was designed as "stores & dwelling" for four families (D.C. Building Permit 2516, February 18, 1907). Carry was a native of Hohenzollern, Germany who became one of Washington's most distinguished citizens. Carry (1852-1925) came to Washington from Cincinnati, where he had been the brewmaster for the John Houch Company, in 1887. Here he founded the Washington Brewery and the National Capital Brewery, which was later converted to the Carry Ice Cream Company during prohibition. Carry was also a director of the National Capital Bank and of the American Security Bank. His daughter, Mary, was married to George Didden (John Clagett Proctor, *Washington Past and Present*, Vol. III, pp. 82-83).

City directories reveal a stable pattern of restaurant and residential use for this building. The Lohse family operated a restaurant from this location from 1919 (first directory entry) until the mid-1950s. The Lohses also lived above the restaurant through 1924 (1919 and 1924 City Directories). Whitlow's

Restaurant has been in the building since the late 1950s. The residential tenants show little turnover. Daniel C. McAllister resided here from the early 1940s through 1960; John Carmody and his wife Edith stayed from 1943 through 1970. Carmody was building superintendent for the Rufus Darby Printing Company. After 1960, city directories show 4 or more residential tenants; it is possible that apartments may have been further subdivided after that date.

The storefront at 503 11th Street was continuously occupied as a cigar shop. Solomon Hirsh was located here in 1914 and 1919; Curtis Draper, from 1929 through 1964 (please see HABS DC-795 for further information about Curtis Draper). Barber shop use commenced ca. 1913. The north storefront at 505 11th Street housed Walter J. Butler, barber, through 1939. Butler, who was black, operated from this location for 27 years, then moved the shop to 803 Eleventh Street. His obituary noted that "judges, bankers and other prominent persons ... were among his customers" (Obituary, *Evening Star*, March 25, 1953). After Butler moved, Joseph K. Lewis, a jeweler, occupied the space through 1970. City directories and building permits also indicate that a florist also used the space during the 1940s and 1950s.

501-3 Eleventh Street is presently occupied by Whitlow's Restaurant and a barber shop. The building will be partially demolished to construct a large office building on the western half of Square 347. The facade of 501-3 Eleventh Street will be retained in its present location within the new construction. This HABS documentation was prepared pursuant to a Program of Mitigation for the required demolition. The Program of Mitigation was developed for the new project under D.C. Law 2-144, the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978.

**SOURCES:**

City Directories  
D.C. Building Permits (National Archives)  
Don't Tear It Down Downtown Survey Forms (D.C. Historic Preservation Office)  
Proctor, John Clagett, ed. *Washington Past and Present, Volume III*. New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1930.  
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Library of Congress)  
"Walter J. Butler, 65, Barber for 40 Years," *Evening Star*, March 25, 1953, n.p.

**HISTORIAN:**

Betty Bird, Architectural Historian  
Mary K. Knill, Researcher  
2607 24th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008  
November 1988

For documentation of individual buildings within Square 347, see:

HABS No. DC-788	Square 347 (Commercial Buildings)
HABS No. DC-789	1005 E Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-790	1007 E Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-791	1009 E Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-792	1013 E Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-793	1011 E Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-795	507 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-796	515 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-797	517 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-798	519 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-799	521 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-800	523 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-801	525 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-802	1008-1010 F Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-803	1012 F Street, NW (Commercial)
HABS No. DC-804	National Capital Press Building

ADDENDUM TO:  
501-503 ELEVENTH STREET, NORTHWEST (COMMERCIAL)  
(Whitlow's)  
~~Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site~~  
Square 347  
Washington  
District of Columbia County  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-794

HABS  
DC  
WASH,  
651-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20240